

shift then their attacks to one of overall spending. But still today, with the two leaders in the Senate having basically come to an agreement, the House of Representatives is going back to the Affordable Care Act and wanting to extract additional things. And all the time the clock is ticking toward not only not being able to bring government back so it can function—stopping the shutdown—but also the potential default that is looming.

I really believe and I understand what the people in my State of Florida feel. They are fed up with this. It is so ridiculous. Yet that is what our politics has come to. The small group in the House of Representatives better start understanding that.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HEINRICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection and so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN.)

DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I rise to concur with the House of Representatives to consider and pass what they seem to be focused on, which is a compromise resolution to the crisis before us which includes “no Washington exemption” language regarding ObamaCare. I strongly support, of course, that language, and I strongly support that discussion and that effort in the House, and I really encourage all of our House colleagues to look hard at that and act on it. In particular, I would encourage my Louisiana colleagues to do that.

I have pushed this issue ever since we got back from the August recess. As the Presiding Officer knows, as we went into that August recess the Obama administration issued a rule—an illegal rule, in my opinion—without statutory authority, contrary to the ObamaCare statute, that gives Members of Congress and congressional staff special status, special exemption, or special subsidy, if you will, not in the law, and one not enjoyed in that way by any other American. This “no Washington exemption” language, which I have been an advocate of with many others here in the Senate and

with many House colleagues, would end that special elite status. That is what we need to do.

I think we need to do it for two crucial reasons—first of all, just on principle. I believe it should be the first rule of our democracy that Washington is treated as the rest of America is treated. What is good for America and what Congress and the administration—what Washington passes on America, it lives with itself with no special status, no special rules, no special exemption or subsidy. That should be true across the board. It should certainly be true regarding ObamaCare. That should be the first rule of American democracy.

Washington doesn’t want that. It wants to impose these new rules on the rest of America; it doesn’t want to live by them itself. It is sort of like when a person walks into a restaurant and hears that the chef never, ever eats at that restaurant, never, ever has a meal out of that kitchen, it makes a person wonder. The same thing is true here on a number of fronts, including ObamaCare.

So the first point is based on pure principle. Washington should live under the same rules it imposes on America across the board, including under ObamaCare. So Washington—Congress, all congressional staff, the President, the Vice President, their political appointees—should have to go to the same fallback option under ObamaCare that is there for all America—the so-called exchanges—and it should do that with no special rules or special deal or special subsidy or special exception. It should do that the same way ordinary Americans do, who in many cases—8 million-plus—are forced out of good health care coverage they have now through their employment and forced onto the ObamaCare exchanges.

The second reason this language is so important is a very practical one, because the sooner we make Washington live by the same ObamaCare rules as the rest of America, the quicker Washington will change ObamaCare in substantial ways, will fix it not just for Washington, as it did through the special illegal Obama administration rule on this subject, but for America. We need to align policymakers’ personal interests in Washington along with the interests of the American people. The way we do that is to make them live by exactly the same rules, make them walk the walk of those Americans who have to go to the ObamaCare exchanges, in many cases against their will—8 million-plus—who were satisfied with the health coverage they had prior to ObamaCare and then who realized that under this law the promise by President Obama that “if you like the health care coverage you have now, you can keep it”—they realized the hard way that promise was a lie.

So there are two crucial reasons we must pass this language into law: first, the principle, and second, the practi-

cality—first, the principle that Washington should live under the same rules the same way as America and, second, the practicality that we need to visit upon Washington all of the burdens and challenges that face America under ObamaCare, including those 8 million-plus Americans going to the exchanges against their will.

Again, I encourage the House to include this “no Washington exemption” language in any compromise they put together with regard to these fiscal issues we are dealing with now. That would be enormously important. It would show leadership. I think it will resonate with the American people. The American people get this issue, and they resent—rightly so—Washington getting a special exemption or a special subsidy under ObamaCare that no other American in that situation gets.

Again, I urge the House to act on that important language. That would show leadership. That would align our personal interests with the folks we represent. That would honor what should be the first principle of American democracy: Washington lives under the same rules as the rest of America on ObamaCare and on everything else.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, we still remain hopeful as the hours, unfortunately, click down towards what could happen in this country if we do not pay our debts. It has never happened in American history. I know when we woke up this morning, when America woke up, they saw Leader REID, the Democratic leader, the majority leader, and Leader MCCONNELL, the Republican leader from Kentucky, coming together in discussion, coming together on a plan, and they are pretty close to agreement.

We know there are still problems in the House of Representatives. I think some of us in this body are fans of Abraham Lincoln, and many of us have studied a lot of things Lincoln said and did. Lincoln used to talk about—when his staff wanted him to stay at the White House to win the war and free the slaves and preserve the Union—he said: I have to go out and get my public opinion bath.

I think some of my colleagues in the House could learn something from going out and listening to real people, not just going on talk radio, not just going to their country clubs, but to listen to people talk about their lives and what this government shutdown has meant.